

B. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 1. (withdrawn) An elongate bat having a longitudinal axis comprising:
2 an elongate one-piece tubular striking member having a first length, a distal
3 end, a proximal end, a striking region intermediate said distal and proximal ends, and a
4 first juncture section adjacent said proximal end converging toward said axis on
5 progressing toward said proximal end, said striking member having a first effective mass;
6 and
7 an elongate one-piece handle member shorter than said first length
8 composed of a material having a second effective mass which is different from said first
9 effective mass, said handle member having a distal end, a second juncture section adjacent
10 the distal end of the handle member, a proximal end, and a gripping portion between the
11 second juncture section and the proximal end of the handle member, the second juncture
12 section having an outer diameter that is greater than the outer diameter of the gripping
13 portion, the second juncture section being firmly joined to the first juncture section of said
14 striking member, such that at least a portion of the first juncture section directly contacts at
15 least a portion of the second juncture section, to provide a rigid interconnection there
16 between to permit substantially complete striking energy transfer between said handle
17 member and said striking member.

1 2. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 1, wherein the effective mass of the handle
2 member is less than the effective mass of the striking member.

1 3. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 1, wherein said first juncture section has a
2 length no greater than 25% of said first length.

1 4. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 1, wherein the second juncture section
2 diverges from said axis on progressing toward said distal end, with a configuration
3 substantially complementary to the converging portion of the first juncture section of the

4 striking member, and portions of said first and second juncture sections rest in mating
5 contact.

1 5. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 4, wherein said first and second juncture
2 sections are substantially frusto-conical, each having a major diameter section and a minor
3 diameter portion, with the major diameter portion of the second juncture section of the
4 handle member being greater than a minor diameter portion of the first juncture section of
5 the striking member.

1 6. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 5, wherein said striking region of said
2 striking member has a first diameter, wherein the outside diameter of the gripping portion
3 of the handle member is less than said first diameter, and wherein said second juncture
4 section of said handle member is captured in said first juncture section of said striking
5 member.

1 7. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 5, which further comprises adhesive material
2 interposed between said first and second juncture sections whereby said first and second
3 juncture sections are adhesively joined.

1 8. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 5, wherein at least one of an outer surface of
2 the second juncture section of the handle member and an inner surface of the first juncture
3 section of the striking member has a plurality of projections which extend radially a
4 predetermined distance.

1 9. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 8, wherein the predetermined distance is in a
2 range of 0.001 to 0.010 inches.

1 10. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 8, wherein the outer surface of the second
2 juncture section of the handle member, the inner surface of the first juncture section of the
3 striking member and the projections define at least one space, and wherein an adhesive at
4 least partially fills the at least one space to join the handle and striking members.

1 11. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 8, wherein the predetermined distance is
2 equal to the thickness of a desired layer of an adhesive for joining the handle and striking
3 members.

1 12. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 8, wherein the predetermined distance is in a
2 range of 0.002 to 0.005 inches.

1 13. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 8, wherein a projection has a width in a range
2 of 0.125 to 0.75 inches.

1 14. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 8, wherein a projection has a width in a range
2 of 0.2 to 0.3 inches.

1 15. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 8, wherein said projections comprise elongate
2 ribs extending substantially longitudinally of said bat.

1 16. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 8, wherein said projections are helical.

1 17. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 8, wherein said projections are on said handle
2 member and outer surfaces of said projections firmly contact the inner surface of said first
3 juncture section of the striking member.

1 18. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 1, wherein the striking member is formed
2 from a material selected from the group consisting of a metal, wood, a fiber composite
3 material, and a non-metallic material.

1 19. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 1, wherein the striking member is composed
2 of metal having a first specific gravity and the handle member is composed of composite
3 material having a second specific gravity which is different from said first specific gravity.

1 20. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 19, wherein the specific gravity of the handle
2 member is less than the specific gravity of the striking member.

1 21. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 1, wherein the handle member is formed from
2 a material selected from the group consisting of a metal, wood, a fiber composite material
3 and a non-metallic material

1 22. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 21, wherein said composite comprises a fiber
2 composite material.

1 23. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 22, wherein said fiber composite material
2 comprises carbon fibers in an epoxy matrix.

1 24. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 22, wherein the fiber composite material
2 comprises a chopped fiber slurry.

1 25. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 1, wherein the handle member is formed of a
2 fiber composite material comprising a plurality of tubular layers, wherein each layer
3 comprises a matrix including structural fibers supported by the matrix, and wherein the
4 plurality of tubular layers includes fiber layer configurations selected from the group
5 consisting of a layer of longitudinally extending fibers, a layer of circumferentially
6 extending fibers, a layer of helically extending fibers, a layer of braided fibers, and
7 combinations thereof.

1 26. (withdrawn) An elongate bat having a longitudinal axis comprising:
2 an elongate one-piece tubular striking member having a first length, a distal
3 end, a proximal end, a striking region intermediate said distal and proximal ends, and a
4 first juncture section adjacent said proximal end converging toward said axis on
5 progressing toward said proximal end, said striking member having a first effective mass;
6 and
7 an elongate one-piece handle member shorter than said first length
8 composed of a material having a second effective mass which is different from said first
9 effective mass, said handle member having a distal end, a second juncture section adjacent

10 the distal end of the handle member, a proximal end, and a gripping portion between the
11 second juncture section and the proximal end of the handle member, the second juncture
12 section having an outer diameter that is greater than the outer diameter of the gripping
13 portion, the second juncture section being firmly joined to the first juncture section of said
14 striking member, such that at least a portion of the first juncture section directly contacts at
15 least a portion of the second juncture section, to provide a rigid interconnection there
16 between to permit substantially complete striking energy transfer between said handle
17 member and said striking member, the striking member being formed of a fiber composite
18 material comprising a plurality of tubular layers, each layer comprises a matrix including
19 structural fibers supported by the matrix, the plurality of tubular layers including fiber
20 layer configurations selected from the group consisting of a layer of longitudinally
21 extending fibers, a layer of circumferentially extending fibers, a layer of helically
22 extending fibers, a layer of braided fibers, and combinations thereof, and the length of the
23 second juncture section, which is overlapped by the first juncture section, being less than
24 thirty percent of the total length of the handle member.

1 27. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 1, further comprising a weighted plug
2 coupled to the proximal end of the handle member, and wherein the length of the second
3 juncture section, which is overlapped by the first juncture section, is less than thirty
4 percent of the total length of the handle member.

1 28. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 27 wherein the weighted plug weighs in the
2 range of 0.5 to 7 ounces.

1 29. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 27 wherein the weighted plug weighs in the
2 range of 2 to 5 ounces.

1 30. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 27 wherein the weighted plug has a length in
2 the range of 1.0 to 4.0 inches.

1 31. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 1, which further comprises a second tubular
2 member concentric with the striking region of the striking member, and wherein the length
3 of the second juncture section, which is overlapped by the first juncture section, is less
4 than thirty percent of the total length of the handle member.

1 32. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 31, wherein said striking member has a
2 hollow circular cross section and a said second tubular member comprises an insert having
3 a circular cross section positioned within the striking region of said striking member.

1 33. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 32, wherein said distal end of said handle
2 section is received in the first juncture section of said striking member and the second
3 tubular member has an end facing said handle section which is spaced a distance from said
4 handle section.

1 34. (withdrawn) A bat comprising:
2 an elongate tubular striking member having a distal end, a proximal end,
3 and a first juncture section adjacent said proximal end and having an inner surface;
4 an elongate one-piece tubular handle member of a composite material having
5 a distal end, a proximal end, and a second juncture section adjacent said distal end of the
6 handle member, the second juncture section having an outer surface, said first and second
7 juncture sections being positioned contiguous each other and firmly joined, such that at
8 least a first portion of the handle member directly contacts at least a first portion of the
9 striking member, to provide a rigid interconnection therebetween to permit substantially
10 complete striking energy transfer between said handle member and said striking member;
11 and
12 an adhesive positioned between the first and second juncture sections and
13 connecting at least a second portion of the striking member to at least a second portion of
14 the handle member.

1 35. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 34, which has a longitudinal axis, said first
2 juncture section converges toward said axis on progressing toward said proximal end of
3 said striking member, and said second juncture section diverges from said axis on
4 progressing toward said distal end of the handle member, with said second juncture section
5 having a configuration substantially complementary to the converging portion of the first
6 juncture section of the striking member, and said first and second juncture sections rest in
7 mating contact.

1 36. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 35, wherein said first and second juncture
2 sections are substantially frusto-conical, each having a major diameter portion and a minor
3 diameter portion, with the major diameter portion of the second juncture section of the
4 handle member being greater than the minor diameter portion of the first juncture section
5 of the striking member.

1 37. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 34, wherein said striking member has a
2 striking region of a first diameter, said handle member has a gripping portion positioned
3 toward its proximal end from second juncture section, the gripping portion having a second
4 diameter which is less than said first diameter, and said handle member extends through
5 the proximal end of said striking member with said second juncture section of said handle
6 member captured in said first juncture section of said striking member.

1 38. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 34, wherein an outer surface of said juncture
2 section of the handle member is disposed within the confines of an inner surface of the
3 juncture section of the striking member and adhesive material is disposed between said
4 inner and outer surfaces to join said handle and striking members.

1 39. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 34, wherein at least one of the outer surface
2 of the second juncture section of the handle member and the inner surface of the first
3 juncture section of the striking member has a plurality of projections which extend radially
4 a predetermined distance.

1 40. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 39, wherein the predetermined distance is in a
2 range of 0.001 to 0.010 inches.

1 41. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 39, wherein the predetermined distance is in a
2 range of 0.002 to 0.005 inches.

1 42. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 34, wherein the outer surface of the second
2 juncture section of the handle member, the inner surface of the first juncture section of the
3 striking member and the projections define at least one space, and wherein the adhesive at
4 least partially fills the at least one space to join the handle and striking members.

1 43. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 39, wherein the predetermined distance is
2 equal to the thickness of a desired layer of the adhesive for joining the handle and striking
3 members.

1 44. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 34, wherein said composite comprises a fiber
2 composite material.

1 45. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 34, wherein the striking member is formed
2 from a material selected from the group consisting of a metal, wood, a fiber composite
3 material, and a non-metallic material.

1 46. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 44, wherein the fiber composite material
2 comprises a chopped fiber slurry.

1 47. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 34, wherein the handle member is formed of
2 a fiber composite material comprising a plurality of tubular layers, wherein each layer
3 comprises a matrix including structural fibers supported by the matrix, and wherein the
4 plurality of tubular layers includes fiber layer configurations selected from the group
5 consisting of a layer of longitudinally extending fibers, a layer of circumferentially

6 extending fibers, a layer of helically extending fibers, a layer of braided fibers, and
7 combinations thereof.

1 48. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 34, wherein the handle member comprises
2 plural tubular layers, each layer comprising a matrix and structural fibers supported by the
3 matrix, with at least one of the layers comprising fibers that extend substantially
4 circumferentially and multiple layers comprising fibers that extend substantially
5 longitudinally, wherein the number of longitudinal layers is greater than the number of
6 circumferential layers.

1 49. (withdrawn) A bat comprising;
2 an elongate tubular striking member having a distal end, a proximal end, a
3 first juncture section adjacent said proximal end; and
4 an elongate tubular handle member having a distal end, a proximal end, and
5 a second juncture section adjacent said distal end of the handle member, the handle
6 member including plural layers of fiber composite material, with selected layers extending
7 the full length of the handle member, and other layers extending over only a selected
8 portion of the length of the handle member less than its full length, said first and second
9 juncture sections being positioned contiguous each other and firmly joined together to
10 provide a rigid inter connection therebetween, such that at least a portion of the striking
11 member directly contacts at least a portion of the handle member, to permit substantially
12 complete striking energy transfer between said handle member and said striking member,
13 said striking member comprising material formed to have appropriate strength in a given
14 direction to successfully withstand the impact of a batted object and said handle member
15 comprising material formed with appropriate configuration to produce selected resistance
16 to bending along its longitudinal axis to produce desired bat swing characteristics.

1 50. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 49, wherein each of the plural layers of fiber
2 composite material include a matrix and structural fiber supported by the matrix, with the

3 majority of the fibers extending at an angle less than about 50° relative to the longitudinal
4 axis of the handle member layers.

1 51. (canceled) The bat of claim 49, wherein the striking member is formed
2 metal and the handle member is formed of composite material.

1 52. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 49, wherein the handle member comprises
2 plural layers of fiber composite material, with selected layers extending the full length of
3 the handle member, and other layers extending over only a selected portion of the length of
4 the handle member less than its full length.

1 53. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 49, wherein said selected layers less than the
2 full length of the handle member are placed at different positions along the length of the
3 handle member.

1 54. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 49, wherein selected layers are formed in a
2 variety of shapes and are laid up in selected positions along the length of the handle
3 member to produce selected strength and stiffness characteristics for the handle member.

1 55. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 52, wherein the handle member comprises
2 plural layers of fiber composite material, with selected ones of the layers being composed
3 of fiber material different from fiber material in others of the selected layers.

1 56. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 55, wherein the selected layers are composed
2 of fibers chosen from a group including carbon fibers, boron fibers, fiberglass, metallic
3 fibers, and combinations thereof.

1 57. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 49, which further comprises a weighted
2 element secured to the proximal end of said handle member, and wherein the length of the
3 second juncture section, which is overlapped by the first juncture section, is less than thirty
4 percent of the total length of the handle member.

1 58. (currently amended) A method for constructing an elongate bat having a
2 longitudinal axis comprising the steps of:
3 forming an ~~one-piece~~ elongate tubular striking member having a circular
4 cross section with a proximal end, a distal end, a striking region therebetween, and a
5 juncture section adjacent said proximal end,
6 swaging at least a portion of the juncture section to converge ~~converging~~
7 toward said axis on progressing toward said proximal end to form a mouth of a first
8 diameter,
9 forming an elongate one-piece handle member of composite material
10 having a circular cross section having a proximal end, a distal end and a juncture
11 section adjacent said distal end which diverges from said axis on progressing toward
12 said distal end to a second diameter greater than said first diameter,
13 assembling the striking member and handle member by inserting the
14 handle member into the striking member with at least a portion of the outer surface of
15 the juncture section of the handle member engaging a portion of the inner surface of the
16 juncture section of the striking member, and remainder portions of said handle member
17 extending longitudinally from said proximal end of the striking member, and
18 joining the juncture section of the handle member to the juncture section
19 of the striking member to provide a rigid interconnection between the striking member
20 and the handle member.

1 59. (original) The method of claim 58, wherein in said joining step adhesive
2 is applied between said juncture sections and cured.

1 60. (original) The method of claim 58, wherein said striking member is
2 formed of a material having a first specific gravity and said handle member is formed
3 of a composite material having a second specific gravity different from said first
4 specific gravity.

1 61. (original) The method of claim 58, wherein the diverging portion of the
2 juncture section of the handle member is formed in a configuration complementary to
3 the converging portion of the juncture section of the striking member.

1 62. (original) The method of claim 58, wherein the step of forming the
2 handle member comprises positioning plural composite layers adjacent each other to
3 form a tubular member, and curing said layers.

1 63. (original) The method of claim 62, wherein the step of forming the
2 handle member comprises the steps of positioning plural composite layers containing
3 structural fibers therein adjacent each other such that each layer is tubular, and
4 orienting the layers such that the majority of the layers have fibers extending at an
5 angle less than about 50° relative to the longitudinal axis of the handle member.

1 Claims 64-68 are canceled.

1 69. (currently amended) A method for constructing an elongate bat having a
2 longitudinal axis comprising the steps of
3 forming an elongate one-piece tubular striking member having at least
4 one a circular cross section with a proximal end, a distal end, a striking region
5 therebetween and a first juncture section adjacent said proximal end, the first juncture
6 section converging ~~covering~~ toward the axis toward the proximal end of the striking
7 member, the tubular striking member formed without a weld extending along one of the
8 circular cross sections;

9 forming an elongate one-piece handle member of composite material
10 having a circular cross section having a proximal end, distal end and a second juncture
11 section adjacent said distal end, the second juncture section diverging from the axis on
12 progressing toward the distal end of the handle member, wherein the step of forming
13 the handle member comprises positioning plural composite layers adjacent each other to
14 form a tubular member and curing said layers,

15 assembling the striking member and handle member with at least a
16 portion of the outer surface of the second juncture section of the handle member

17 engaging a portion of the inner surface of the first juncture section of the striking
18 member, and
19 joining the second juncture section of the handle member to the first
20 juncture section of the striking member to provide a rigid interconnection
21 therebetween.

1 70. (original) The method of claim 69, wherein in the step of forming the
2 handle member, selected numbers and orientation of composite layers are applied.

1 71. (original) The method of claim 70, wherein the handle member has a
2 selected overall length, selected ones of said composite layers have a length
3 substantially equal to said overall length, and others of said composite layers have a
4 length shorter than said overall length.

1 72. (original) The method of claim 71, wherein composite layers which are
2 shorter than said overall length are positioned at varying positions intermediate the
3 proximal and distal ends of said handle member.

1 73. (original) The method of claim 70, wherein the composite layers each
2 comprise a matrix including structural fibers supported by the matrix, and wherein the
3 layers are selected from a group of fiber layer configurations consisting of a layer of
4 longitudinally extending fibers, a layer of circumferentially extending fibers, a layer of
5 helically extending fibers, a layer of braided fibers, and combinations thereof.

1 74. (withdrawn) A bat for striking a ball, the bat comprising:
2 an elongate tubular striking member extending along a longitudinal axis and
3 having a distal end, and a proximal end, the striking member including a first juncture
4 section integrally formed with the striking member and positioned adjacent the proximal
5 end of the striking member, the striking member being formed of a first material; and
6 an elongate tubular handle member extending along the longitudinal axis and
7 having a distal end and a proximal end, the handle member including a second juncture
8 section integrally formed with the handle member and positioned adjacent the distal end of

9 the handle member, the handle member coupled to the striking member such that at least a
10 portion of the first juncture section firmly and directly contacts at least a portion of the
11 second juncture section, the handle member having a resistance to bending along the
12 longitudinal axis in the range of 200-1980 lbs/in a three-point bend stiffness test wherein
13 the handle member is transversely supported in first direction by a pair of supports spaced
14 apart a selected distance, with the first support adjacent the distal end and a second support
15 adjacent the proximal end, and is transversely loaded in a second direction, opposite the
16 first direction, at a location on the handle member in a region between 30% and 40% of
17 said selected distance from the distal end of the handle member.

1 75. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 74, wherein the handle member has a
2 resistance to bending along the longitudinal axis in the range of 400-900 lbs/in.

1 76. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 74, wherein the handle member has a length
2 in the range of 9 to 22 inches, and wherein the handle member has a weight in the range of
3 3 to 8 ounces.

1 77. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 76, wherein the handle member has a weight
2 in the range of 5 to 7 ounces.

1 78. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 74, wherein the striking member is formed
2 from a material selected from the group consisting of a metal, wood, a ceramic, and a fiber
3 composite material.

1 79. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 74, wherein the handle member is formed of
2 a fiber composite material comprising a plurality of tubular layers, wherein each layer
3 comprises a matrix including structural fibers supported by the matrix, and wherein the
4 plurality of tubular layers includes fiber layer configurations selected from the group
5 consisting of a layer of longitudinally extending fibers, a layer of circumferentially

6 extending fibers, a layer of helically extending fibers, a layer of braided fibers, and
7 combinations thereof.

1 80. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 79, wherein the helically extending fibers of
2 the at least one layer of helically extending fibers extend along the handle member at an
3 angle that is between +/- 1 to 89 degrees from the longitudinal axis.

1 81. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 79, wherein the handle member includes a
2 proximal gripping portion and a distal tapered portion, wherein one of the proximal
3 gripping portion and the distal tapered portion is formed with a larger number of layers
4 than the remaining portion.

1 82. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 74, wherein the composite material of the
2 handle member comprises a chopped fiber slurry.

1 83. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 74, further comprising a weighted plug
2 coupled to the proximal end of the handle member, and wherein the length of the second
3 juncture section, which is overlapped by the first juncture section, is less than thirty
4 percent of the total length of the handle member.

1 84. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 83, wherein the weighted plug weighs in the
2 range of 2 to 5 ounces.

1 85. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 83, wherein the weighted plug has a length in
2 the range of 1.0 to 4.0 inches.

1 86. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 79, wherein the fibers are formed of a
2 material selected from the group consisting of glass, fiberglass, carbon, boron, metal and
3 combinations thereof.

1 87. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 79, wherein the fibers have an area fiber
2 density within the range of 0.0143 and 0.048 grams/cm².

1 88. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 74, wherein the first material has a greater
2 impact resistance to ball strikes than the composite material of the handle member.

1 89. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 74, wherein at least one of an outer surface of
2 the juncture section of the handle member and an inner surface of the juncture section of
3 the striking member has a plurality of projections which extend radially a predetermined
4 distance.

1 90. (withdrawn) A bat for striking a ball, the bat comprising:
2 an elongate tubular striking member extending along a longitudinal axis and
3 having a distal end, a proximal end, and a first juncture section adjacent the proximal end
4 of the striking member, the striking member being formed of a first material; and
5 a one-piece elongate tubular handle member extending along the longitudinal
6 axis and having a distal end, a proximal end and a second juncture section adjacent the
7 distal end of the handle, the handle member coupled to the striking member such that at
8 least a portion of the first juncture section firmly and directly contacts at least a portion of
9 the second juncture section;
10 the bat having a resistance to bending along the longitudinal axis in the
11 range of 500 to 2100 lbs/in a three-point bend stiffness test wherein the bat is transversely
12 supported in a first direction at a first location 6 inches from the distal end of the striking
13 member and a second location 6 inches from the proximal end of the handle member, and
14 is transversely loaded in a second direction, opposite the first direction, at a third location
15 at mid-length position on the bat.

1 91. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 90, wherein the bat has a resistance to
2 bending along the longitudinal axis in the range of 500-1500 lbs/in.

1 92. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 90, wherein the handle member has a length
2 in the range of 9 to 22 inches, and wherein the handle member has a weight in the range of
3 3 to 8 ounces.

1 93. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 90, wherein the handle member has a weight
2 in the range of 5 to 7 ounces.

1 94. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 90, wherein the striking member is formed
2 from material selected from the group consisting of a metal, wood, a ceramic, and a fiber
3 composite material.

1 95. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 90, wherein the handle member is formed of
2 a fiber composite material comprising a plurality of tubular layers, wherein each layer
3 comprises a matrix including structural fibers supported by the matrix, and wherein the
4 plurality of tubular layers includes fiber layer configurations selected from the group
5 consisting of a layer of longitudinally extending fibers, a layer of circumferentially
6 extending fibers, a layer of helically extending fibers, a layer of braided fibers, and
7 combinations thereof.

1 96. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 95, wherein the handle member includes a
2 proximal gripping portion and a distal tapered portion, wherein one of the proximal
3 gripping portion and the distal tapered portion is formed with a larger number of layers
4 than the remaining portion.

1 97. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 90, wherein the composite material of the
2 handle member comprises a chopped fiber slurry.

1 98. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 90, further comprising a weighted plug
2 coupled to the proximal end of the handle member, and wherein the length of the second
3 juncture section, which is overlapped by the first juncture section, is less than thirty
4 percent of the total length of the handle member.

1 99. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 98, wherein the weighted plug weighs in the
2 range of 2 to 5 ounces.

1 100. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 98, wherein the weighted plug has a length in
2 the range of 1.0 to 4.0 inches.

1 101. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 95, wherein the fibers have an area fiber
2 density within the range of 0.0143 and 0.048 grams/cm².

1 102. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 90, wherein the first material has a greater
2 impact resistance to ball strikes than the composite material of the handle member.

1 103. (withdrawn) The bat of claim 90, wherein at least one of an outer surface of
2 the juncture section of the handle member and an inner surface of the juncture section of
3 the striking member has a plurality of projections which extend radially a predetermined
4 distance.

1 Claims 104-107 are canceled.

1 108. (currently amended) A method for constructing a bat having a
2 longitudinal axis comprising the steps of:
3 forming an elongate ~~one-piece~~ tubular striking member having a
4 proximal end, a distal end, a striking region therebetween, and a first juncture section
5 adjacent the proximal end of the striking member converging toward the axis on
6 progressing toward the proximal end, the proximal end having a first inner diameter;
7 forming an elongate one-piece handle member of composite material
8 having a first length, a proximal end, a distal end and a second juncture section
9 adjacent the distal end of the handle member, the handle member diverging from the
10 axis on progressing toward the distal end to a second outer diameter that is greater than
11 the first inner diameter, the second juncture section having a second length that is less
12 than thirty percent of the first length;

13 assembling the striking member and the handle member by inserting the
14 handle member into the striking member with the outer surface of the second juncture
15 section of the handle member being overlapped by the inner surface of the first juncture
16 section of the striking member; and

17 joining the striking member to the handle member, such that at least a
18 first portion of the first juncture section directly contacts at least a first portion of the
19 second juncture section, to provide a rigid interconnection between the striking member
20 and the handle member.

1 109. (original) The method of claim 108, wherein, in the joining step,
2 adhesive is applied between the first and second juncture sections and cured, whereby
3 at least a second portion of the first juncture section is adhesively joined to at least a
4 second portion of the second juncture section.

1 110. (original) The method of claim 108, wherein the striking member is
2 formed of a material having a first specific gravity and the handle member is formed of
3 a composite material having a second specific gravity different from the first specific
4 gravity.

1 111. (original) The method of claim 108, wherein the second juncture section
2 of the handle member is formed in a configuration complementary to the first juncture
3 section of the striking member.

1 112. (original) The method of claim 108, wherein the step of forming the
2 handle member comprises positioning plural composite layers adjacent each other to
3 form a tubular member, and curing the layers.

1 113. (original) The method of claim 112, wherein the step of forming the
2 handle member comprises the steps of positioning plural composite layers containing
3 structural fibers therein adjacent each other such that each layer is tubular, and
4 orienting the layers such that the majority of the layers have fibers extending at an
5 angle less than about 50° relative to the longitudinal axis of the handle member.

1 Claims 114-117 are canceled.

1 118. (original) The method of claim 108, wherein the striking member is formed
2 from a material selected from the group consisting of a metal, wood, a fiber reinforced
3 composite material, and a non-metallic material.

1 119 (original) The method of claim 108, further comprising the step of inserting
2 a weighed plug into the proximal end of the handle member, and coupling the weighted
3 plug to the handle member.

1 120 (original) The method of claim 119, wherein the weighted plug weighs in
2 the range of 0.5 to 7 ounces, and has a length in the range of 1.0 to 4.0 inches..

1 121 (canceled) The method of claim 108, further comprising the step of
2 inserting a tubular insert within the striking member, such that the tubular insert can
3 move independently of the striking member upon impact with a ball.

1 Claims 122-135 are canceled.